

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, please add the following new paragraphs before paragraph [0001]:

- [0000.2] CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS
- [0000.4] This application is a 35 USC 371 application of PCT/DE 2004/001574
filed on July 20, 2004.
- [0000.6] BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION
- [0000.8] Field of the Invention

Please add the following new paragraph after paragraph [0001]:

- [0001.5] Description of the Prior Art

Please replace paragraph [0002] with the following amended paragraph:

[0002] A fuel filter of ~~this kind is~~ **the type with which this invention is concerned**, known from DE 198 11 689 A1[[]] ~~The housing of the fuel filter is~~ **has a housing** made of solid plastic and has a beaker-shaped bottom part and a lid-like top part that is detachably fastened to the beaker-shaped bottom part by means of a quick release. The beaker-shaped bottom housing part contains a hollow, cylindrical star filter that rests on a pedestal section. The pedestal section contains a sump for water separated out during filtration of the fuel and a water drain that can be closed by means of a screw plug. In addition, the pedestal region is provided with a fuel inlet that feeds into an inlet duct for a heating unit welded in place beneath the pedestal section. The pedestal section is also provided with an outlet duct that allows the fuel to travel from the heating unit to the dirty side of the filter. The flow passes through the filter insert radially from the outside to the inside. Its clean side is connected to an outlet fitting via which the cleaned fuel can be drained off in the direction of the engine via

a first duct. In addition, the outlet fitting is provided with a second duct, which can be closed by an overflow valve and permits the fuel to be returned to the tank. The clean side of the filter is also connected to the sump.

Page 4, please add the following new paragraph after paragraph [0013]:

[0013.5] BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please replace paragraph [0014] with the following amended paragraph:

[0014] The present invention will be explained in greater detail below, in conjunction with drawings, in which: ~~that show preferred, particularly advantageous exemplary embodiments.~~

Please replace paragraph [0015] with the following amended paragraph:

[0015] Fig. 1 is a perspective ~~depiction~~ view of a first exemplary embodiment of the fuel filter according to the present invention,

Please replace paragraph [0016] with the following amended paragraph:

[0016] Fig. 2 shows a top plan view of the fuel filter shown in Fig. 1,

Please replace paragraph [0019] with the following amended paragraph:

[0019] Fig. 5 is a perspective ~~depiction~~ view of ~~another~~ a second embodiment form of the fuel filter according to the present invention,

Please replace paragraph [0020] with the following amended paragraph:

[0020] Fig. 6 shows an end view of ~~another~~ a third exemplary embodiment of the fuel filter according to the present invention,

Page 5, please replace paragraph [0024] with the following amended paragraph:

[0024] Fig. 10 shows a longitudinal section through the fuel filter along a plane labeled X – X in Fig. 7, and

Please add the following new paragraph after paragraph [0025]:

[0025.5] DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Page 7, please replace paragraph [0032] with the following amended paragraph:

[0032] As is particularly clear in Figs. 2 and 3, the connection 8 for the fuel outlet extends in a plane that is ~~vertical~~ parallel to the longitudinal axis, whereas the connection 4 for the fuel inlet extends in a plane extending parallel to this, close to the longitudinal wall 2c of the filter housing 2.

Please replace paragraph [0033] with the following amended paragraph:

[0033] As can be surmised from the sectional views in Figs. 3 and 4, the filter housing 2 contains a horizontally extending filter insert with a filter element 11. The filter element 11 is flat. The filter ~~element~~ housing 11 is block-shaped. The filter element 11 therefore fits into the block-shaped filter housing 2 with ease. The top of the filter element 11 is completely encapsulated by a wall 12; together with the filter element 11, the wall 12 encloses a clean side 13 of the fuel filter. The clean side 13 is essentially above the filter element 11, between the filter element 11 and the wall 12. The clean side 13 is connected via a duct segment 14 to the connection 8 for the fuel outlet. The filter element 11 is inserted inside the filter housing 2 in guide rails 15 provided on the side walls.

Page 13, please replace paragraph [0054] with the following amended paragraph:

[0054] The gap 16 and the bottom region 18 are series connected and matched to each other so that these parts inside the filter housing 2 combine to constitute a particularly effective inlet distribution stabilizer 30. In the selected exemplary embodiments, the gap 16 has the regions 16a, 16b, [[16c]] **16d**, 16e and grooves 16l and 16q that are matched to one another. The cross section of the gap 16 is so narrow that the fuel flows into the bottom region 18 in a uniformly distributed fashion. Since the flow of fuel into the bottom region 18 is uniformly distributed, the fuel flows at a low speed, via the shortest route, directly to the closest region of the filter element 11 and a largely uniform fuel quantity flows through each region of the filter element 11.

Page 14, please add the following new paragraph after paragraph [0055]:

[0056] The foregoing relates to preferred exemplary embodiments of the invention, it being understood that other variants and embodiments thereof are possible within the spirit and scope of the invention, the latter being defined by the appended claims.